



MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE
83rd session
Agenda item 6

MSC 83/6/3
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LRIT-RELATED MATTERS

International LRIT Data Centre and International LRIT Data Exchange

Submitted by the United States

SUMMARY

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| <i>Executive summary:</i> | This document provides information on the offer of the United States regarding the International LRIT Data Centre and International LRIT Data Exchange |
| <i>Action to be taken:</i> | Paragraph 8 |
| <i>Related documents:</i> | COMSAR 11/18, section 14 and COMSAR 11/14/6 |

Background

1 The United States has on several occasions, most recently in COMSAR 11/14/6 (United States), offered to host, build, and operate the International LRIT Data Centre (IDC) and International LRIT Data Exchange (IDE) on an interim basis until such time as there was a viable alternative. Thus far, these offers have received little or no apparent support. In COMSAR 11/WP.4/Add.1, the Working Group on e-Navigation Strategy and LRIT issues (the Group) thanked the United States for its offer but did not feel that then was the time to debate or discuss the offer. A number of delegations asked the United States to resubmit its offer for consideration at MSC 83. COMSAR 11 simply noted the discussion within the Group.

Discussion

2 The United States is fully prepared to offer to host, build, and operate the IDE. At this time, the United States is prepared to build, host, and operate the IDC, provided that participating Contracting Governments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention (Contracting Governments) pay their communication costs of ships entitled to fly their flag. The IDE effort does not place the significant, recurring and largely unknown cost burden on the United States that building and hosting the IDC does. That cost burden has forced the United States to reconsider and withdraw its original offer to build, host and operate on an interim basis the IDC free of charge.

3 As noted in another United States submission to this session under this agenda item, the United States intends to develop and implement a National LRIT Data Centre (NDC) for the United States. This NDC is planned to be located at the United States Coast Guard Operations Systems Center (OSC) in Kearneysville, West Virginia.

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4 The United States supports the technical criteria for the location of the IDC and IDE developed by the *Ad hoc* Working Group on Engineering Aspects of LRIT (the Group). We believe there are no constraints within those criteria that would preclude the United States from being able to host, build, and operate the IDC and IDE at our OSC site noted above.

5 However, in response to discussions at COMSAR 11, we now believe that there is significant risk to operating the IDC. It is not known how many Contracting Governments will associate the ships entitled to fly their flags with the IDC. More importantly, it is not known which of these Contracting Governments will choose not to purchase LRIT information from the IDC. That is, operating the IDC comes with a potentially significant, recurring and largely unknown cost burden in the form of unpaid-for messages.

6 Any potential United States offer of temporarily building, hosting and operating the IDC and IDE will likely require Administrations associated with the IDC to pay for communications costs. Our governmental structure and authority does not readily allow us to be in the position of billing. That is, we are not easily capable of being in an accounts receivable situation nor of recouping costs. We will investigate our authority to contract out the billing, accounting and collection for an IDC and if that contractor can charge for and receive payment in order to make that a self-sustaining system, i.e. for cost recovery. We would consider funding alternatives for the IDC, such as, Administrations that associate with the IDC pay for communications or if their domestic law permits, they were to pass on LRIT costs to ships (as noted in SOLAS regulation V/19-1.11.2).

7 In the event our offer to build, host, and operate the IDC on an interim basis is not accepted and there is no other viable alternative for an IDC, we are still prepared to build and operate the IDE. This offer allows the LRIT system to work with multiple data centres operating and joined by the IDE. Absent the existence of an IDC, it will, however, require Contracting Governments to associate the ships entitled to fly their flag with National, Regional or Co-operative LRIT Data Centres.

Action requested

8 The Committee and the Intersessional MSC Working Group on LRIT are invited to consider the above and decide as appropriate.
